



MARINES LIKE DOING WHAT THEY ARE DOING

General James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, recently spoke at the Brookings Institute in Washington D.C. He talked about two different communities in the Marine Corps. "So we have the active duty young Marine, and in some cases the active duty old Marine, but the young Marines, and then we have their families, so we really have two different communities that we pay very, very close attention to. But let me talk about the young Marines first. It's almost counterintuitive... the morale is extremely high. And I'm always hesitant to say that in public because



people look and they go, you don't -- General, you're not plugged in. Actually, I think I am and I think Carlton Kent is and I think our commanders are and I think are generals are and our colonels. Morale is very, very high, and it defies, in some cases, just the normal way we think about the things. The kids like doing what they're doing. ...You know, we often don't see that they feel good about it written in the papers back home, but they feel good about doing what

they're doing. I mean they feel like they're making a difference. They feel like when they're in a village and they watch the market come to life, and they watch the children go to [school] -- they feel good about that. The second community, of course, is the family. And I'll tell you, we spend a lot of money and put a lot of effort, not that money is a measure of family happiness, but we recognize as the family goes, so goes the Marine. And we've got, I think, certainly leading family programs, things that we're doing, great concern, all the way from Bonnie and I, all the way down, our families, trying to take care of them and provide them with information, trying to care for them, trying to take care of their needs, understanding the psychological strain on families as their husband or their loved one or their spouse goes through their second or third or fourth deployment. So I think I personally feel the strain on the families more than I do on the Marines."

Read Brookings Transcript or **Listen to the audio**

Also Read Gen. Amos' comments at CNAS and **Exclusive Interview with Men's Health**

COMING OF AGE DURING WAR, FIRST LADY LAUDS MILITARY KIDS RESILIENCE AT QUANTICO



During Quantico's Middle/High School graduation, First Lady Michelle Obama lauded the graduating seniors for their strength, resilience and maturity as they came of age in military families during a time of war. "I think that all of you are incredibly special," Obama told the class of 36 students. Growing up in military families, the seniors faced more challenges and had more experiences in their first 18 years than most people have in a lifetime, Obama said. They each moved, on average, more than six times,

with one student tallying up a total of 18 moves in the same number of years. Many have dealt with a parent's deployments, and the associated worry and fear, the first lady noted. But these challenges also have equipped them with a "resilience and sturdiness of spirit" that will prepare them for life's setbacks and hardships, she added. "A bad grade on a test, a bad day at work, that's not going to knock you off your game," Obama said, "because from a very young age, you all have been dealing with the big stuff, and that's given you perspective."

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View more photos of Graduation at Quantico

EVENTS

RELIEF, APPOINTMENT OF THE SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS JUNE 9

[Sergeant Maj. Micheal P. Barrett](#) will assume the Office of the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps from [Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent](#) during a Relief and Appointment ceremony June 9 at 7 p.m. at Marine Barracks Washington. The event will also serve as the retirement ceremony for Sgt. Maj. Kent. Although not officially considered a Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, when Archibald Sommers was appointed to the grade of Sergeant Major January 1, 1801, it was a solitary post, similar to the modern billet of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. In 1833, an act of legislation made the rank of sergeant major permanent



for the Marine Corps and by 1899 five Marines held the rank of sergeant major. This continued until 1946, when the rank was abolished, only to be re-introduced in 1954 as part of the Marine Corps rank structure. The post of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps was established in 1957 as the senior enlisted advisor to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the first such post in any of the five branches of the United States Armed Forces. The Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps is chosen by the Commandant of the Marine Corps to serve as his advisor and as the preeminent and highest ranking enlisted Marine with a protocol equivalency of a three-star lieutenant general.

[View Press Release](#)

[Read about the History of the Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps.](#)

REPORT FOR DUTY JUNE 20TH: MARINE WEEK ST. LOUIS



The United States Marine Corps will partner with the City of St. Louis to bring Marine Week to the Gateway City, June 20-26, 2011. The week-long celebration will showcase the unique



characteristics of America's Corps through more than two dozen events where attendees can watch combat demonstrations; climb aboard aircraft and ground equipment, to include helicopters, the V-22 Osprey and amphibious vehicles; and participate in community service projects alongside Marines. As part of the week's events,

attendees can take in the sights and sounds of the Silent Drill Platoon, Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, Marine Corps Band, All-Marine sports teams and military working dog teams. Marines will demonstrate extensive combat capabilities, including a Marine Air-Ground Task Force demonstration, highlighting the Marines' distinct ability to fight our country's battles in the air, on land and sea. Free and open to the public, all Marine Week events will honor and recognize Marines, including hometown and Missouri based, for their service and sacrifice. Currently, more than 2,300 active duty and reserve Marines from Missouri are serving at home and overseas, including Marines participating in combat operations in Afghanistan.

Visit Marine Week St. Louis' Homepage and **see the Events planned for Marine Week.**
Watch 1 minute YouTube Marine Week St. Louis teaser.



NEWS

SELF SUSTAINING, PREMIER AVIATION HANGER OPENS

In early May, the Marine Corps began a new chapter in "going green" by cutting the ribbon on a premier aviation hanger that is considered self-sustaining by using solar power. The \$66 million Marine



Aircraft Group 49 facility is Energy & Environmental Design compliant, which means the hangar provides a healthier work and living environment. This contributes to higher productivity and improved employee health and comfort.

"The construction of this hangar emphasizes both Marine Forces Reserve and 4th Marine Aircraft Wing's commitment to provide the Marine Corps and the nation with combat ready forces," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Andrew Souchet, 4th MAW, G-4 BRAC officer. "The new facility, located aboard Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, has energy-efficient fabric hangar doors and heated floors to reduce the amount of energy needed inside the hangar while Marines are servicing helicopters," he said. It has water-free urinals in all the male heads, light motion sensors that turn the lights on when they detect motion, in all offices and a dedicated facility collection point for recycling paper, plastic, aluminum and glass. The hangar placement is accounted for the need to minimize the impact on installation wetlands and vegetation such as trees.



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MARINE SURVIVES TWO IED ATTACKS, STAYS IN FIGHT



Lance Cpl. Andrew J. Armstrong's fellow Marines call him "Rock." The name fits him well. The Corinth, N.Y., native has survived not one, but two improvised explosive devices. On Dec. 10, 2010 while on a patrol driving through the village of Corgulat he and his Marines spotted something suspicious on the road. Minutes later, the patrol started taking fire. Sgt. Christopher Holm, the team leader for FCT 6, told the Marines to take cover on the western side of the vehicles. "I just turned the corner and the next thing I knew, I was on the ground," Armstrong

said. Weeks later, during another patrol, Armstrong was within 20 meters of another IED blast. It is policy in Afghanistan for troops to remain on a forward operating base if they are exposed to three IEDs. Capt. Ramon Pattugalan, the team leader for FCTs 5 and 6, did not want to risk having Armstrong confined to Camp Leatherneck. "He's a true team player. He's

the type of guy that doesn't want us to go into the fight without him," Pattugalan said. So Pattugalan, who serves as the joint terminal attack controller for FCT 6 and coordinates close air support for the Georgian troops, mentored Armstrong into becoming a joint forward observer. "He helped me learn how to control aircraft," Armstrong said. "That way I can go to Joint Forward Observer's course when we get back to the States. Eventually, I can be a team chief." [Read More](#)

[Also Read : Regional Command South-West Weekly News Round-Up](#)

US, THAI MILITARIES BEGIN NON-LETHAL TRAINING

Marines and Sailors with Special Operations Training Group and Military Police Support Company, both from III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, III MEF, and nearly 150 personnel with the Thai military and police forces, began training May 30 as part of the Non-Lethal Weapons Executive Seminar 2011. NOLES '11, which is scheduled to take place from May 30 through June 10, is U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific's premiere multilateral theater security cooperation event for non-lethal weapons and is designed to promote awareness of



non-lethal weapons use to maintain order in low-intensity scenarios. Due to the significant variance of non-lethal weapons capabilities from country to country, the seminar seeks to improve interoperability between partner nations. Over the past week, instructors from SOTG and MP Support Company have given classes and practical application sessions on communications skills, crowd control dynamics, pressure-point control techniques, mechanical-advantage control holds, baton techniques, non-lethal munitions, the human electro-muscular incapacitation device, also known as an X-26 Taser, and oleoresin capsicum spray, more commonly called OC spray. [Read More](#)

[Also View: Photo of Assistant CMC Congratulating Colombian Officer Graduates](#)

MACEDONIAN "SCORPIONS" PREPARE FOR AFGHANISTAN WITH HELP OF BLACK SEA MARINES

With AK-47 assault rifles locked-and-loaded, a line of Macedonian troops stand



in front of their targets at a combat marksmanship range on BTA. On the command to shoot, dust from the ground erupts from behind their targets and fills the air from their Kalashnikovs' rounds engaging their "enemies." The Macedonian 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade, nicknamed the "Scorpions," travelled from their home country to BTA to train with U.S. Marines of Black Sea Rotational Force 11 in counterinsurgency operations. The troops shot Table 3 of the Marine Corps Combat Marksmanship

Program. The training they will receive in BTA is part of their mobilization for their upcoming time in Afghanistan. "We are about to be deployed," said Macedonian Capt. Georgie Fistik, executive officer, 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade, "so this kind of shooting is good for us, because we will be in urban areas [in Afghanistan]." "We have similar training but we don't have combat marksmanship like this," said Fistik. "It's great to be [in Romania] to learn new things and get this experience." [Read More](#)

[Also Read: Nations Apart, Warriors Together](#)



MARINES LIVE, OPERATE ON VITAL TRAINING ISLAND



A large volcano-shaped rock pierces the sky; a tight-knit squad of Marines inhabit a small patch of land. To them, Ie Shima is more than their work environment, it is their home. The U.S. military's first operation on Ie Shima dates back to World War II. A large element of American troops hit the beaches of Ie Shima April 16, 1945. There was light enemy resistance on the beach, said Mark Waycaster, a tour guide with Marine Corps Community Services. After the island was seized, Ie Shima became the largest airfield in the Okinawa prefecture occupied by

American military forces. After the war, the Marine Corps operated on one-third of the island.

Throughout the years, it has been used to conduct training exercises, such as AV-8B Harrier aircraft takeoff and landing exercises and human and cargo parachute drop training. Today, the facility primarily consists of the northwest part of the island, with much of the facility's land occupied by local community members who farm, said 1st Lt. Daniel Farfan, officer-in-charge of the Ie Shima training facility, Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Butler.

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MARINE CORPS PARTNERS WITH DVIDS

The Marine Corps and DVIDS are partnering to help spread information about the Marine Corps experience. DVIDS, which stands for Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System, is a state-of-the-art, 24/7 operation that provides a timely, accurate and reliable connection between the media and the



military serving in the United States and around the world. We are asking Marines, Marine Veterans, Spouses, Bloggers, and friends of the Marine Corps to register on the website.

[Visit DVIDS Marine Corps webpage](#)

[Lookup your favorite Marine unit on DVIDS](#)

HEROES

WOUNDED MARINE RETURNS TO FORT WAYNE



Hundreds of people gathered Saturday afternoon in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in a show of support to welcome home an injured Marine. Brandon Long, 20, lost both of his legs after being hit by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan last December. He spent the past months going through rehabilitation at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington D.C., but he's finally home. Family members, friends, veterans and well-wishers greeted Brandon with tears, hugs and hand shakes. "Everything out here's pretty awesome,"



Brandon said. "It's a nice welcome home. It feels pretty good." Fort Wayne's Homeland Security Director, Bernie Beier, spoke on behalf of Mayor Tom Henry who declared June 4th, 2011 "Brandon Long Day." He also received an American Flag from Congressman Marlin Stutzman's office according to Wayne.com.

Brandon said he was surprised by the turnout level of community support. "Thank you. It means a lot to me," he said. "It means a lot to the guys back in Pendleton who couldn't make it with us today." Brandon left the airport with a police escort and headed over to American Legion Post 409 in Leo, IN where several events were planned in his honor. [Read More](#)

FEROCITY IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY"

While deployed to Afghanistan in July 2009, 1st Sgt. Curtis Rice was serving as the senior enlisted advisor with an Embedded Training Team, a group of American service members whose mission is to mentor and operate with the Afghan National Army. He helped prevent an Afghan National Army observation post from being overrun by approximately 50 enemy combatants, according to the citation. In addition, Rice bravely faced enemy fire to resupply ammunition and fix a M240 machine gun. He was presented with the Bronze Star Medal, and according to his citation, had saved the lives of Marines, Special Forces Soldiers and Afghanistan National Army Soldiers. Rice



believes his heroic actions under fire would not have been possible without the hard work of his fellow Marines. Rice said that all of the members of his team showed bravery during the firefight. "You really don't care about anything else at that time but helping out your fellow Marines," said Rice. He spoke of the Marines in Afghanistan and how they are continuing to show exemplary bravery under fire. "There [are] Marines right now as we speak, out there on the battlefield, doing extraordinary things," said Rice. "Much more extraordinary than what I did that day." [Read More](#)

RIDING FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS



On his bicycle journey across the country, Marine Maj. Bill Conner's friends were never far from his thoughts. "A lot of times when you have a tail wind, the (American) flag will be tapping you on the shoulder," he said about the flag that was flown in Iraq by Maj. Doug Zembiec, who was killed in 2007 during combat. "Anytime I felt the flag tapping me on the back, I always thought of Doug just tapping me on the shoulder and saying, 'Hey, keep on going.'" Conner cycled 3,113 miles from

San Diego to Bethany Beach to raise money for the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, set up to provide immediate financial support for injured and critically ill members of the military and their families. He ended his trek on May 27 by dipping the front tire of his bike into the Atlantic Ocean as reported by Delaware Online. Conner set out on Easter Sunday with a goal of raising \$35,500 through the Semper Fi Ride Across America campaign. As of Monday, donations totaled \$30,816. Zembiec, along with Maj. Megan McClung and Lt. Cmdr. Erik Kristensen, were Conner's classmates at the Naval Academy who died while serving in the war. [Read More](#)

FEATURED BLOGS

MARINE CORPS ASSOCIATION SEEKS BLOGGERS



Hey you, yes you! The Marine Corps Association is looking for bloggers to write about Marine Corps History, Aviation, and Family. While the Marine Corps

Association may not actively support, or agree with the opinions expressed by its bloggers and/or community members – they support the free sharing of observations and opinions. They encourage the exploration of new ideas, the divergence of competing opinions and open and honest discourse. You do not need to be a member of the MCA to participate or

comment, but you must register online with their sites. The MCA created a bloggers section in order to provide a professional forum to discuss USMC-related subjects, closely adhering to their mission "To foster the spirit and preserve the traditions of the Marine Corps...". Although Blog volunteers might initiate these discussions through their blogs, the continued interaction between them, and everyone within the online community, is vital. It is MCA's intention to attract people knowledgeable about and interested in the Marine Corps, to share their thoughts here. The Association's blog website states, "We would like to offer the widest and most thought-provoking discussions, creating the most robust and participatory place where such conversations can be had on the Internet!"

Click [here](#) to visit the MCA Blogs'

